

# KOREAN LOAN WORDS IN RUSSIAN LANGUAGE AS AN EXAMPLE OF ACCEPTING KOREAN CULTURE

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**Abstract:** Sabina Ragozina. 2018. Korean loan words in Russian language as an example of accepting Korean culture.

In the age of globalization Korean traditional and contemporary culture are becoming more and more open to the world. Main evidence can be found in the language of any particular country which has any ties with Republic of Korea. Loan words always deal with realias not existing in the culture of target language, thus there may occur some particular points of the process and results of lexical borrowings.

In this article some special characteristics of Korean loan words on the example of words denoting food (as cuisine-related vocabulary is one of the most unchangeable vocabulary, and cuisine itself is a part of traditional culture which is accepted by foreigners first and foremost) will be revealed showing some vocabulary changing and even some vocabulary disparity. Corpus and dictionary methods were used while this investigation. Examples of loan words were taken from Korea travel guide books and some Russian cooking books.

**Keywords:** loan words, lexical borrowings, Korean studies, Korean language, Russian language

주 제 어: 어휘차용, 한국어학, 한국어, 러시아어, 어휘

## 1. introduction

Words denoting food would be accidental gap in almost all cases while translating from one language to another. Traditional cuisine is one the most stable part of every nation's culture. These leads to word-loaning. There are three basic reasons for word-loaning:

1. Absence of phenomenon in translation language;
2. Absence in translation language identical concept;
3. Difference in lexical-stylistic characteristics. [Ivanov, 82]

There is no big difference between first and second reason, and food names loaning would fall under both of them.

Texts from guide books published by Korea Tourism Organization in 2011 and 2013, texts from cooking books about Korean cuisine and culture-oriented book of Andrei Lankov were analyzed. In this article most frequently found words were analyzed from semantic and morphological point of view.

## 2. Korean loan words in Russian language

### 2.1 Most frequently appeared lexical borrowings

In the table below there are only some words denoting Korean dishes with high repetition rate.

Word (Russian/Korean)	Repetition rate in texts	Appearance in Russian National Corpus
<i>Кимчхи</i> / 김치	35	19
<i>Кимчхи ччиге</i> / 김치찌개	1	1
<i>Пибимпан/пипимпаб</i> / 비빔밥	6	4
<i>Пулькоги</i> / 불고기	2	3
<i>Соджу</i> / 소주	3	17

In the table above all words were loaned by transliteration as most of culture culture-specific element. But substitutions were used as well as transliterations in discourse. The problem of these texts is that some substitutions which were used cannot correctly reveal the meaning of real element. Also these elements may obtain morphological characteristics of substitutions.

### 2.2 Analysis of loan words

Most frequently appeared word is “*кимчхи*” (김치). In Russian there are few variants of transliteration: *кимчи*, *кимчхи* and old-fashioned *чимчи*. Korean word kimchi 김치 etymologically is

not pure Korean. It derived from Chinese 침채 [沈菜].

This Koreanism appears in various guide, country-specific and cooking books. Andrei Lankov in his book *“Korea: everyday life and holidays”* comments on this words as *“extremely spicy marinaded cabbage”* [Lankov, 144]. Although this word is used several times in his book, author continue to comment on the meaning and specific features of this dish (*“kimchi is one the most important dish of Korean everyday life”* [Lankov, 145]).

Guide books published by Korea Tourism Organization in 2011 comment on kimchi as *“sour cabbage”* [Korea guide book (2011), 13], book of 2013 as *“fermented vegetables”* [Korea guide book (2013), 106]. There we deal with intertextual comments which differ in only one word *“sour”* and *“fermented”*. It is a point to mention, because in Russian language *“sour”* (*“квашенный”*) and *“fermented”* (*“ферментированный”*) describe two different ways of preparing food, where *“sour”* means using salt and ready meal is supposed to have salty taste. This is incorrect comment on kimchi, because main ingredient is red pepper – kochu (고추) and it has spicy taste. In later edition there is more accurate definition, as word *“fermented”* explains exact way of preparing. Cooking books about Korean cuisine also define kimchi as *“sour cabbage”* [Lazerson, 11].

Also most of books name this Korean dish as cabbage, thou kimchi etymologically means method of cooking. Chinese 침채 [沈菜] means *“dip into water”*. While kimchi might be made from various vegetable: cucumber, white radish, onion, etc. Thus the only correct intertextual comment was in Korean guide book (2013).

Name of this popular Korean meal also appears in newspaper corpus of National Corpus of Russian Language (NCRL). There kimchi adopts morphological traits of substitutions. In previous examples word *“kimchi”* was used in singular neutral gender and changed its cases according to singular neutral characteristics. But in some examples from newspapers kimchi acquire traits of singular feminine. This comes from acquiring morphological traits of substitution. The most frequent substitution is *“cabbage”* which has feminine gender in Russian language.

Word *“кимчи”* appears in newspaper corpus for 19 times, but another transliteration *“кимчи”* appears in basic corpus of NCRL for 12 times and in newspaper corpus for 13 times, total 25. According to official system of cyrillization of Korean 김치 should be transliterated as *“кимчи”*. This variant also appears in Korean-Russian dictionary. Thou *“кимчи”* is also frequently used.

One of the derived words which also frequently appears in texts is kimchi stew *“кимчи ччуге”* (김치 찌개). Intertextual definition of this word tightly connected with word *“kimchi”*. It is well-known fact that in Korean cuisine there are a lot of names derived from one part of the dish or one ingredient. Thus, it is of high importance to give proper explanation of source word and create correct image of culture-specific element before moving to complex word.

Guide books comment on kimchi stew as “*soup with kimchi*”. This definition is based on source word “*kimchi*” which is the main ingredient. But neither Lankov, nor guide books comment on the serving method and specific features of this dish.

Next popular word is “*нубимнан*” (비빔밥). In Lankov’s book it appears only once, and there are no intertextual comments, except for mentioning that it was royal dish. Cooking books also ignore this dish. But it still frequently appears in guide books. As bibimbap is a dish with several ingredients, it is hard to find proper one-word or short substitution. Thou in Guide book (2011) when bibimbap first appears in discourse it is named as “*Korean pilaf*” [Korea guide book (2011), 47]. Word “*pilaf*” also may confuse Russian reader, because it is meant to be Uzbekistan dish made mostly from rice and meat prepared traditionally on open fire. This fact may lead to incorrect image in Russian reader’s mind. Further bibimbap was commented as “*meat-and-rice stew*” [Korea guide book (2011), 170], “*rice with vegetables and meat*” [Korea guide book (2013), 102] or “*steamed rice with vegetables*” [Korea guide book (2011), 152].

Newspaper corpus of NCRL also contains 4 appearances of this word. But by contrast with previous example, this word does not show any morphological traits difference or various explanations.

But still there is problem with transliteration, as there are more than two variants. In NCRL and dictionary it is written as “*нубимнан*”, but variant “*нубимнаб*” appears as frequently as official one. Also there is one more variant “*нубимбан*”. According to Contsevich’s cyrillization system final □ before ▢ might be transliterated as “*мб*” or “*мн*” [RAUK].

Next loaning combines two major problems described above: transliterations and intertextual comments. This word is “*пульткоги*” (불고기).

This dish is very popular among Koreans and foreigners due to its cooking methods. Europeans usually associate it with barbecue, Russians – with shashlik. Lankov give a particular emphasis to this meal, restaurants specialized on pulgogi and proper way of eating. But still Russians may be confused because of comparison with shashlik. Probably barbecue (lots of Korean restaurants in Russia use term “*Korean barbecue*”) would be the most correct substitution for pulgogi. Korean-Russian dictionary also define 불고기 as shashlik.

Cooking books do not really comment on this dish. They pay special attention for marinade and way of eating.

In NCRL this loaning appears in two variants “*бульгоги*” and “*пульткоги*”. “*Пульткоги*” is defined as “*fried meat*” or “*meat fried on open fire*”, word frequency is 3. While “*бульгоги*” in one of the examples was denoted as “*cabbage rolls*” (золубы) which is totally different. Cabbage rolls for Russians mean that cabbage has been already stuffed, but pulgogi is usually eaten with fresh lettuce. This descriptive mistake creates wrong image of this dish to Russian reader, equalizing it with Russian

cuisine.

One more word denoting traditional drink that was adopted is “*codжy*” (소주). It is the most famous Korean alcohol. Soju frequently appears in guide books and even in cooking books.

In Korea guide book (2011) soju is defined as “*distill liquor*” [Korea guide book (2011), 64]. This explanation creates image of transparent and clear type of alcohol. But word “*liquor*” again can confuse reader because according to Big encyclopedia of culinary art liquor is sweet drink with fruits or berries as one of its ingredient [Big encyclopedia of culinary art]. There are types of fruit soju, but they are soju with juice rather than liquors.

Cooking books call soju “*a drink reminding vodka*” [Lazerson, 40], which is much closer to the original, than liquor. Lankov also calls soju “*Korean 20 degrees’ vodka*” [Lankov, 66, 203]. In the middle of his book he insists that soju is “*rice liquor*” [Lankov, 178].

NCRL finds 17 repetitions of this word: 5 in basic corpus and 12 in newspaper corpus. In one of the examples of basic corpus there is book by Dina Rubina, where soju is defined as Japanese fruit vodka. Newspaper corpus’ texts name soju as distill traditional drink or vodka. But in few texts and in Korean-Russian dictionary soju is described as strong alcoholic drink, thou usually it is 15-24% degrees’ strong, which would not mean strong for most Europeans complaining it with Russian vodka, whisky, etc.

Also there are 2 variants of this borrowing: “*сочжy*” and “*codжy*”. First variant is based on Kholodovich’s system and second on Kontsevich’s system of cyrillization. Both variants are used, but only “*codжy*” appears in NCRL.

### 3 Conclusion

Lexical borrowings mentioned above are only small part from list of borrowings, but even this small part shows the problem of appropriate translation. It is always a point of high importance whether to use intertextual comment or substitution to give proper definition. It is impossible to create accurate image of realia which is absent in someone’s culture. Moreover, according to type of text, gender, prospect reader translation would vary. But it seems necessary to create special dictionaries of cultural realias so interpreter or even reader can check whether the image from text is correct or not.

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